

# Sola Gratia • Sola Fide • Solo Christo

Long Beach Alliance Church • May 4, 2014 • Pastor Chris Lankford

**For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.**

**~Ephesians 2:8-9 (ESV)**

## 1) *Sola Gratia* (By Grace Alone)

- A) Vividly capturing the cancerous heart condition of the pre-Christian, the Apostle Paul darkly paints the “sons of disobedience,” those unaware of their helpless, hopeless, and hostile state (Ephesians 2:1-3).
- B) Yet, while still “children of wrath” (2:3), God lavishes His mercy and love onto people to provide them with life, resurrection, and position “with Christ,” bringing together God’s great kindness for eternity (2:4-7).
- C) As though bursting from his heart, Paul has already mentioned salvation by grace alone (*sola gratia*, 2:5), but now returns to the concept to rightly twin grace with faith alone (*sola fide*). Grace alone by faith alone, two keys to understand, appreciate, and appropriate the Gospel (2:8).
- D) The “grace” of God is given to mankind based on God’s own mercy and love, and is exclusively provided by God’s own initiative. Grace “is the gift of God,” and cannot be earned, merited, or repaid. Grace is the foundation of salvation provided by the work of Jesus Christ alone (*solo Christo*) and obtained by faith alone (*sola fide*, 2:8).
- E) Grace is God’s attitude toward sinners which provides “justification,” the forgiveness of sins (Romans 3:23-26). Grace is given to mankind because of Christ’s work, especially His redemptive blood sacrifice on the cross (1:6-7). God’s grace is lavished on believers (1:8) so that God can glorify Himself through His people (2:10), and is magnified by God’s extraordinary redemptive work of making sinners righteous (2:4-7).

## 2) *Sola Fide* (By Faith Alone)

- A) Grace is the basis of salvation. Grace is “twinned” with “faith,” which is the means by which we receive salvation. The two work in tandem. Grace provides provision, faith receives gracious provision (2:8).
- B) Simply stated, faith is “trust” in Jesus Christ. We receive grace by placing the whole of our trust in Jesus Christ (*sola fide*, Galatians 2:16). We no longer direct or ‘self-will’ our lives, but rather we live by faith in Jesus Christ, complete union of life with Christ (Galatians 2:20).
- C) In English, faith can be completely separate from faithfulness, or faithful actions. You can believe something to be true and then act in opposition to your beliefs. For example, you can believe eating vegetables is the best way for you to eat, but never eat vegetables.
- D) In Scripture, faith and faithfulness are unified concepts. In other words, faith and faithful living are in union with one another. Our faith is actually based on the faithful life of Christ, and when we “have faith in Christ,” it produces faithful followers of Jesus Christ.
- E) This is why there is such an emphasis on faith being “not of your own doing; it is the gift of God, not as a result of works” (2:8-9). Conceptually, it would be easy to conclude that living faithfully could result in receiving grace. Thus, the strong emphasis on “faith alone.”

## 3) *Solo Christo* (Through Christ Alone)

- A) The impact of these words on our lives should be devastating! We offer nothing because we are helpless, hopeless, and hostile. In fact, any human involvement actually fatally depreciates salvation’s effect!
- B) If our faith is in ourselves, our works, our own methods, our own means, or is on any other foundation – we are destined for destruction! There is only One by whom we can be saved, the true foundation of salvation, Jesus Christ alone (*Solo Christo*, 1 Corinthians 3:11-15)!
- C) Salvation is from God, by grace, through Christ, and God receives all the credit (2:9). He is the only One who gets to “boast” (receive glory).
- D) Such a great salvation! Deliverance from slavery, death, and wrath, provided as a gift by the mercy and love of our gracious God! With the multitude we will all cry out “Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God” (Revelation 19:1)!

In Ephesians 2:8 it says, "And this is not your own doing..." What is the "this?" Is it "grace?" Is it "salvation?" Is it "faith?" Is it all of these? None of these? What exactly is the "gift of God?"



live it up

Sola Gratia (by grace alone)  
Sola Fide (by faith alone)  
Solo Christo (through Christ alone)

If we have nothing to do with anything having to do with our salvation, what do we have to do with living the Christian life at all? Does it matter at all what we do, and if so, why?

(Try to be sure to support your ideas with the Bible 😊)



extra

There are two other "sola" statements which are biblical markers of faith, **sola scriptura** (by Scripture alone), and **solī Deo gloria** (glory to God alone). Why are the "sola" statements significant for followers of Jesus Christ?

# growth group guide

“sola gratia, sola fide, solo Christo”  
(ephesians 2:8-9) may 4-9, 2014

## warm up

In your opinion, what is the most attractive character quality another person could have?

Any musings, comments, or questions from Sunday's Sermon?

## chop it up

Read The Text: Ephesians 2:8-9

On the basis of the divine gift of salvation a person is saved by means of faith. What is faith? What is the object of biblical faith?